

Message Text

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S/CPR - MR. GOOKIN (SUBS.)
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INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PDIP, KN, US

SUBJECT: U.S. POLICY TOWARD NORTH KOREA AND GUIDANCE ON
CONTACTS WITH NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS

REFS: (A) 75 STATE 114288, (B) GENEVA 9291 (NOTAL).

1. U.S. POLICY

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A. WE AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAVE PUBLICLY AGREED
ON SEVERAL ASPECTS OF POLICY IN THE INTEREST OF REDUCING
TENSIONS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA AND ESTABLISHING A
DURABLE FRAMEWORK FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST
ASIA.

(1) WE SUPPORT THE ENTRY OF BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH

KOREA INTO THE UNITED NATIONS WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ULTIMATE REUNIFICATION.

(2) THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO MOVE TOWARD IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA PROVIDED THAT NORTH KOREA'S PRINCIPAL ALLIES (I.E. THE PRC AND THE USSR) WILL ALSO TAKE STEPS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SOUTH KOREA.

(3) THE UNITED STATES HAS OFFERED TO MEET TOGETHER WITH NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA AND THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC), AS THE PARTIES MOST IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED, TO EXPLORE MEANS FOR REDUCING TENSIONS ON THE PENINSULA OR TO CONSIDER POSSIBILITIES FOR A LARGER CONFERENCE WITH KOREA'S OTHER NEIGHBORS.

(4) THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT, HOWEVER, ENTER ANY NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE FUTURE OF THE PENINSULA UNLESS THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS A FULL PARTICIPANT IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

2. THE NORTH KOREAN POSITION AND THE U.S. RESPONSE

A. NORTH KOREA HAS REJECTED ALL THE PROPOSALS ABOVE AND HAS UTILIZED THE RIVALRY BETWEEN CHINA AND THE USSR TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM LEVERAGE ON ITS ALLIES NOT TO ACCEDE
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TO ANY ARRANGEMENT WHICH GIVES STATUS TO THE GOVERNMENT IN SEOUL, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE ROK CONTAINS ABOUT HALF THE PENINSULA, TWO-THIRDS OF ITS POPULATION, AND HAS A FAR MORE DYNAMIC AND PROSPEROUS ECONOMY.

B. NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS OCCASIONALLY APPROACH U.S. OFFICIALS OVERSEAS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH EAGER (AND OFTEN PARTISAN) INTERMEDIARIES, TO URGE THAT THE UNITED STATES OPEN DIRECT CONTACT WITH NORTH KOREAN AUTHORITIES TO RESOLVE KOREAN PROBLEMS. THE NORTH KOREANS INTEND THAT SOUTH KOREA WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THIS DIALOGUE, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE ON OCCASION IMPLIED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO INCLUDE SOME SUBORDINATE FORM OF SOUTH KOREAN PARTICIPATION AT A LATER STAGE. SOME INTERMEDIARIES HAVE EVEN PRESSED THE NORTH KOREAN CASE TO THE EXTENT OF SUGGESTING THAT IF THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT WERE CHANGED, PRESUMABLY WITH U.S. CONNIVANCE, NORTH KOREANS WOULD FIND A "DEMOCRATIC" SUCCESSOR REGIME A FIT PARTNER FOR SERIOUS CONVERSATION. OFTEN THE LATTER CONDITION IS LINKED WITH THE ADDITIONAL CAVEAT THAT BANNED POLITICAL PARTIES (I.E. THE COMMUNIST PARTY) MUST BE REHABILITATED.

C. FOR PYONGYANG TO STATE THAT IT WILL NEGOTIATE ONLY WITH A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT IN SEOUL SATISFACTORY TO IT IS HARDLY A CREDIBLE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. WHEN THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN MADE TO U.S. OFFICIALS BY EASTERN EUROPEAN INTERMEDIARIES WE HAVE FIRMLY STATED THAT WE FIND SUCH A SUGGESTION TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

D. THAT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO DEAL WITH NORTH KOREA OVER THE HEADS OF OUR SOUTH KOREAN ALLIES HAS BEEN AND

REMAINS AN ENDURING ASPECT OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD KOREA. IT HAS BEEN A CLEAR AIM OF NORTH KOREAN TACTICS TO LEGITIMIZE THEIR CLAIM THAT THE USG IS THE CONTROLLING
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POWER IN SOUTH KOREAN AFFAIRS AND THAT THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS A "PUPPET" ENTITY RATHER THAN A SOVEREIGN STATE. THUS, PYONGYANG HAS ATTEMPTED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH US RATHER THAN SEOUL REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE PENINSULA. SUCH TACTICS ARE ALSO OBVIOUSLY AIMED AT CREATING MAXIMUM DISTRUST AND DISSENSION BETWEEN THE ROK AND ITS ESSENTIAL SECURITY PARTNER.

E. WE SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION OF KOREA, A STATED OBJECTIVE OF BOTH SEOUL AND PYONGYANG, BUT PENDING AGREEMENT AMONG THE KOREAN PEOPLE CONCERNING REUNIFICATION, THE ONLY REALISTIC POLICY IS TO ACCEPT THE REALITY OF TWO GOVERNMENTS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. A MAJOR AIM OF U.S. POLICY IS TO ENCOURAGE NORTH KOREA TO ACCEPT THE REALITY OF A DYNAMIC AND INDEPENDENT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL ENTITY IN SOUTH KOREA WITH WHICH IT MUST DEAL IF REAL SOLUTIONS ARE TO BE FOUND TO THE ACUTELY HOSTILE DIVISION OF THE PENINSULA.

3. TRIPARTITE TALKS

IN RECENT MONTHS THE PRESS HAS SUGGESTED THAT THERE WERE ACTIVE PROPOSALS FOR A TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE BETWEEN NORTH KOREA, SOUTH KOREA, AND THE UNITED STATES. WHILE BOTH THE ROK AND WE BELIEVE THE QUADRIpartite FRAMEWORK IS THE NEXT BEST ALTERNATIVE TO BILATERAL NORTH KOREAN-SOUTH KOREAN DISCUSSIONS, WE HAVE ALWAYS MADE IT PLAIN THAT THE ONLY FUNDAMENTAL USG CONDITION IS THAT SOUTH KOREA BE A FULL PARTICIPANT IN ANY DISCUSSIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE PENINSULA. IN ITS MOST RECENT FORM THE TRIPARTITE IDEA WAS A YUGOSLAV PROPOSAL, BUT IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DEFINITELY REJECTED BY NORTH KOREA WITH CONDITIONS AS GIVEN IN PARA 2B ABOVE.
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4. RECENT INITIATIVES

ON JUNE 23 PRESIDENT PARK OF SOUTH KOREA PROPOSED THE CREATION OF CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY TO PROMOTE NORTH KOREA - SOUTH KOREA ECONOMIC RELATIONS. HE ANNOUNCED HIS READINESS TO HOLD MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETINGS WITH THE NORTH IF DESIRED, BUT ALSO INDICATED THAT THE SOUTH WOULD BE FLEXIBLE ON THE MEANS FOR OPENING TRADE, TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE INITIAL CONTACTS MADE BETWEEN BUSINESSMEN. THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMED THIS INITIATIVE TO REOPEN THE LONG-STALLED DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS. IN VIEW OF PAST

NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA STATEMENTS ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF OPENING ECONOMIC RELATIONS (USUALLY COUCHED IN TERMS OF ALLEVIATING THE ALLEGEDLY STARVING CONDITION OF THE SOUTH KOREAN PEOPLE), AND GIVEN PYONGYANG'S INCREASING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, WE HAD HOPED THE NORTH MIGHT MAKE SOME CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE. HOWEVER, NORTH KOREA HAS DENOUNCED THE PROPOSAL AND STATED THAT IT COULD BE ENTERTAINED ONLY AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL AMERICAN MILITARY AND CHANGE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN SEOUL.

5. GUIDANCE FOR CONTACTS

A. THE DEPARTMENT EXPECTS THAT NORTH KOREA WILL CONTINUE ITS SPORADIC EFFORT TO INSTITUTE DIRECT CONTACTS WITH U.S. DIPLOMATS OVERSEAS. BUT BARRING FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN NORTH KOREAN POLICY WE SEE NO NEED TO RESPOND TO SUCH APPROACHES BEYOND THE DICTATES OF COMMON COURTESY AS INDIVIDUAL SITUATIONS MAY REQUIRE.

B. IN VIEW OF THE ABSENCE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH KOREA AND THE
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CONTINUING HOSTILITY OF NORTH KOREA TOWARD THE UNITED STATES, AMERICAN OFFICIALS ARE EXPECTED GENERALLY TO AVOID CONTACTS WITH NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVES OVERSEAS. NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT BE INVITED TO SOCIAL FUNCTIONS HOSTED BY U.S. OFFICIALS, NOR SHOULD AMERICAN OFFICIALS ATTEND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS HOSTED BY NORTH KOREAN OFFICIALS OR GIVEN IN THEIR HONOR. AN EXCEPTION

TO THIS GENERAL PROHIBITION WOULD BE THOSE FUNCTIONS HOSTED BY AMERICAN OR NORTH KOREAN CHIEFS OF MISSION OR PRINCIPAL OFFICERS IN THEIR CAPACITY AS DEAN OF THE LOCAL DIPLOMATIC OR CONSULAR CORPS. AMERICAN OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT ATTEND ANY FUNCTION HONORING A NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE.

C. U.S. OFFICIALS WHO ATTEND FUNCTIONS AT WHICH NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVES ARE PRESENT SHOULD NOT ENCOURAGE CONTACT BEYOND NORMAL COURTESIES. SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED, AND ALL SUBSTANTIVE APPROACHES SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENT WITH AN INFO COPY TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL.

D. ALTHOUGH THIS GUIDANCE UPDATES INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT, IT DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY. POSTS SHOULD SEEK DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE FOR SITUATIONS FALLING OUTSIDE THESE GUIDELINES. VANCE

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